

DO YOU KNOW LINDA KASS

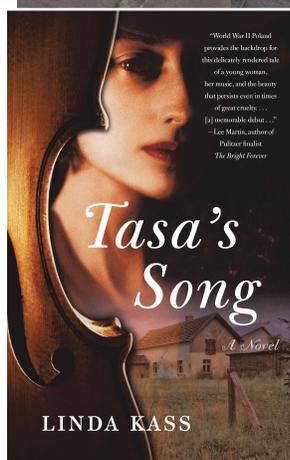
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Photography by *Lorn Spolte*

“Do you know Linda Kass?” seems like a silly question to ask in central Ohio. Her work as a volunteer and advocate for education and the arts has led to board appointments at the Columbus Symphony Orchestra, The Bexley Education Foundation, United Way of Central Ohio, KidsOhio.org and The Ohio State University. She is an avid cyclist and supporter of cancer research, logging over 1500 miles each year and having raised over \$100,000 for “The James” Cancer hospital through her participation in Pelotonia. She founded and continues to chair the visiting author program for the Bexley Community Book Club. She is a busy lady, and known to many.

What many may not know is that she is an accomplished journalist who recently released her first novel, *Tasa’s Song*. A beautifully composed narrative set in eastern Poland during World War II, Kass tells the story of an aspiring violinist who endures a year living underground, unimaginable loss and terrifying circumstances. Informed and inspired by her own mother’s experiences during the Holocaust, *Tasa’s Song* is the result of years of dedication and focus. A lot of people talk about writing a book someday. They mention it wistfully, hopefully, and with an obvious skepticism that testifies to the massive undertaking of such an endeavor. For Linda, the story almost wrote itself. Almost.

Driven by a desire to learn the details of her parents’ vastly different experiences during the Second World War, Linda started interviewing them on tape, over weekends at home while freelancing for publications like the *Detroit Free Press* and *TIME Magazine*. As she tapped away, transcribing those interviews on her typewriter, she wasn’t writing a book. She was documenting her parents’ lives. When her sister asked that Linda use the notes to create a keepsake for their parents’ 60th wedding anniversary, she wasn’t writing a book. She was publishing a family memoir. Then, later, a trip to Poland—her first—triggered a desire to tell an even more universal story of survival: a novel about a violin prodigy, a Polish Jew, growing up and falling in love during the gathering storm of a world war. It was then that Linda decided to write a book.



It is, no doubt, a gift to have the kind of natural curiosity that, when combined with boundless energy and self discipline, simply gets things done. Linda Kass gets things done. When she determined to write a novel, she took the framework of a story and began to chip away at the roadblocks anyone faces when completing a project of magnitude. Educate yourself on the people, places and events surrounding the narrative. Check. Learn the best practices of writing historical fiction. Check. Put words - a lot of them - down on paper in a meaningful way. Check. Seek skilled editors and be humble enough to accept feedback. Check.

As accolades for *Tasa’s Song* are rolling in, Linda isn’t resting on her laurels. Most authors plan book signings. Linda Kass plans book readings accompanied by string quartets. “Music was such a big part of the story because I felt Tasa needed something to feed her spirit,” Linda explains. “I just kept coming back to questions like ‘how does a person survive this kind of loss and loneliness?’” In May, she joins Carpe Diem String Quartet who will mirror music from the novel at the McConnell Arts Center in Worthington for what she describes as “the intersection of music and literature”. *Tasa’s Song* is available at amazon.com and other major book stores. To buy tickets to “Tasa’s Song” book reading and concert, visit carpediemstringquartet.com. Learn more about the story behind the book at lindakass.com. 